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Message Text

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AMEMBASSY PARIS
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S E C R E T STATE 162631

EXDIS, USSALTTWO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM

SUBJECT: BILATERALS WITH UK ON SALT PRINCIPLES AND THEATER SYSTEMS

1. SUMMARY: ON JUNE 22 INTERAGENCY TEAM MET WITH UK REP-
RESENTATIVES (MOBERLY, WILBERFORCE, HILL, NORBURY, REEVE,
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PAKENHAM) FOR REVIEW OF SALT, PRINCIPLES FOR SALT III, AND PROPOSED US UNILATERAL STATEMENT ON THEATER SYSTEMS. 'S PRESENTATION SIMILAR TO THAT SUMMARIZED IN REPORT ON FRENCH BILATERAL JUNE 21 (SEPTEL). UK INDICATED THAT IT PREFERRED TO SEE US STATEMENT AS A CONTINGENCY IN EVENT SOVIETS MADE A STATEMENT ON THEATER SYSTEMS. HOWEVER, UK INDICATED THAT TEXT OF STATEMENT WAS ACCEPTABLE, BASED ON THEIR UNDER-STANDING THAT IT PROTECTED ALL OPTIONS, INCLUDING THE OPTION OF NOT NEGOTIATING ON THEATER SYSTEMS. UK RAISED A NUMBER OF SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS ON THEATER ISSUES. END

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SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING INITIAL US PRESENTATION, MOBERLY SAID HE ASSUMED US INTENDED STATEMENT FOR CONTINGENCY THAT SOVIETS MIGHT MAKE STATEMENT ON THEATER SYSTEM. US EXPLAINED THAT WAS NOT NECESSARILY THE ONLY CASE, AND THAT WE MIGHT WANT TO MAKE STATEMENT REGARDLESS. US FACED THREE ISSUES WHICH RELATED TO THE POSSIBLE STATEMENT:

-- THE MILITARY BALANCE WITH RESPECT TO THEATER FORCES, ON WHICH THE HLG WAS WORKING;

-- THE NEED TO MAINTAIN ALLIANCE CONFIDENCE, ESPECIALLY THE FRG, WHICH ATTACHES POLITICAL AND MILITARY IMPORTANCE TO DEALING WITH THE THEATER QUESTION;

-- FACT THAT US CRUISE MISSILES ARE IN THE PROTOCOL, AND IT IS PROVIDED IN THE PRINCIPLES THAT PROTOCOL ISSUES WILL BE SUBJECT OF FURTHER NEGOTIATION. US STATEMENT WOULD BE A MARKER, NOT A COMMITMENT OR AN INVITATION TO NEGOTIATE. IT LEAVES OPEN WHETHER OR NOT THERE SHOULD BE A NEGOTIATION AFFECTING THEATER SYSTEMS.

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UK ASKED WHETHER BY MAKING A STATEMENT US MIGHT INVITE A SOVIET COUNTER-STATEMENT, WHICH WOULD PUT POTENTIALLY DISADVANTAGEOUS SOVIET VIEWS ON THE RECORD. US SAID IT WAS LIKELY SOVIETS WOULD WANT TO PUT DOWN SOME MARKER ON FBS ISSUES IN ANY CASE. EVEN IF SOVIETS REACTED BY WELCOMING NEGOTIATIONS ON THEATER SYSTEMS ON BOTH SIDES, US LANGUAGE IN NO WAY COMMITS US TO GO ALONG. WHETHER OR NOT WE USED OUR STATEMENT COULD NOT BE GOVERNED BY WHAT SOVIETS MIGHT DO, SINCE WE WOULD AT A MINIMUM HAVE TO HAVE A STATEMENT LIKE THIS FOR RATIFICATION.

UK ASKED WHETHER THE PHRASE "US SYSTEMS PRINCIPALLY DESIGNED FOR THEATER MISSIONS" WOULD COVER CRUISE MISSILES, SINCE THEY HAD ASSUMED INCLUSION OF CRUISE MISSILES IN SALT HAD BEEN ON GROUNDS THEY WERE STRATEGIC. WERE WE NOW SPLITTING UP THE NATO DETERRENT INTO SEPARATE THEATER AND STRATEGIC COMPONENTS? US EXPLAINED THAT OUR ACCEPTANCE OF LIMITS ON GLCM AND SLCM IN THE PROTOCOL DID NOT IMPLY THAT WE HAD ACCEPTED ANY NOTION THAT THEY WERE CENTRAL SYSTEMS. MOREOVER, US NOTED THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN THE CONTINUUM OF DETERRENCE, WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT THERE ARE SYSTEMS OF DIFFERENT CHARACTERISTICS.

MOBERLY CLOSED DISCUSSION OF THE US FORMULATION BY SAYING THAT SINCE IT APPEARED THAT THE US FORMULATION WOULD LEAVE ALL MATTERS OPEN, AND WOULD NOT COMMIT US TO NEGOTIATIONS, HE COULD BE COMFORTABLE. HOWEVER, HE WOULD CONTINUE TO

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PREFER AT THIS POINT TO CONSIDER THE STATEMENT AS A CONTINGENCY. US INDICATED THAT IT PLANNED TO GO TO THE NAC IN JULY TO EXPLAIN THE STATEMENT AND DISCUSS TACTICS, SO THAT WE COULD BE IN A POSITION TO USE IT WHEN AND IF APPROPRIATE.

3. IN RESPONSE TO US QUESTION ABOUT SOVIET ATTITUDES, WILBERFORCE SPECULATED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE KEENLY IN-

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TERESTED IN STOPPING NEW DEVELOPMENT OF NATO THEATER NUCLEAR FORCES. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE NEW SOVIET MOVE IN MBFR MIGHT BE RELATED TO A DESIRE TO SECURE OPTION III LIMITS, THEREBY PRECLUDING A NEW US MRBM. SOVIETS MUST ALSO BE CONCERNED AT PROSPECT OF CRUISE MISSILE DEPLOYMENTS, AND THUS MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF SALT TO LIMIT THAT POSSIBILITY. COMMODORE HILL SAID THAT SOVIETS MAY SEE TIMING IN THEIR FAVOR, WITH A SIGNIFICANT LEAD IN THEATER NUCLEAR SYSTEMS FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS, WHICH, HOWEVER, COULD BE ERODED IF THEY DO NOT QUICKLY CONCLUDE ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS IN TWO OR THREE YEARS ON CRUISE MISSILES. WILBERFORCE SAID THAT US HAD ALREADY LIMITED ONE THEATER OPTION IN THE 600 KM. RANGE LIMIT ON ALCMS ON NON-HEAVY BOMBERS IN THE SALT TREATY, WHICH WOULD EFFECTIVELY PRECLUDE ALCMS REACHING THE USSR, UNLESS THE AIRCRAFT THEMSELVES PENETRATED. US NOTED THE WEST HAD NOT GONE BEYOND OFFERING LIMITS ON PERSHING AND EQUIVALENT FOLLOW-ON SYSTEMS, AND THAT WE WERE NOT COMMITTED TO INCLUDING MRBMS IN LIMITATIONS. (WILBERFORCE SUBSEQUENTLY RETURNED TO THIS POINT IN MBFR CONVERSATIONS, REPORTED SEPTEL).

4. RESPONDING TO UK INTERPRETATION OF SOVIET ATTITUDES, US SUGGESTED A RANGE OF POSSIBLE VIEWS. SOME FEEL THAT SOVIETS PERCEIVE AN ADVANTAGE IN PRESSING FOR THEATER NEGOTIATIONS, PARTICULARLY SINCE NATO IS GIVING SIGNS OF BEING SERIOUS ABOUT THEATER NUCLEAR FORCE MODERNIZATION. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOME FEEL THAT SOVIETS WOULD NOT WANT TO GO AHEAD WITHOUT ALSO SEEKING LIMITS ON THE UK AND FRANCE, WHICH THEY MAY NOT JUDGE TO BE ATTAINABLE. IF THE SOVIETS ARE NOT LIKELY TO SEEK A CONFRONTATION WITH THE UK AND FRANCE OVER THE ISSUE, IT IS UNCERTAIN WHETHER THEY WOULD WANT TO PROCEED BILATERALLY WITH THE US, AS A

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FIRST STEP. IF THEY DID, THEY MIGHT SEEK IN BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE US TO SECURE THEIR LONG-STANDING GOALS OF COMPENSATION, NON-CIRCUMVENTION, AND NON-TRANSFER.

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5. MOBERLY OUTLINED NUMEROUS UNCERTAINTIES, WHICH HAD LED HMG TO CONCLUDE EARLIER THAT A NEGOTIATION ON THEATER SYSTEMS WOULD NOT BE TO NATO'S ADVANTAGE, INCLUDING RELATIVE PREPONDERANCE OF SOVIET FORCES, GEOGRAPHY, AND UNACCEPTABILITY OF LIMITS ON UK POLARIS. HE NOTED THAT HLG HAD NOT ADVANCED FAR ENOUGH TO KNOW WHAT WE WANTED WITH THE NATO POSTURE, AND WE DID KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT CRUISE MISSILE OPTIONS TO DECIDE WHAT WE WANTED AND WHAT WE COULD AFFORD TO NEGOTIATE AWAY. WHAT WE NEEDED WAS A SERIOUS EFFORT TO RESOLVE THESE QUESTIONS. US AGREED THAT WE OBVIOUSLY DID NOT WANT TO GET INTO NEGOTIATIONS

UNTIL AND UNLESS WE HAD ANSWERS. WE ALSO HAVE TO LOOK AT WHAT THE BALANCE WOULD LOOK LIKE IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY CONTROL. IN US VIEW, INFORMAL TALKS IN THE FALL ON ARMS CONTROL QUESTIONS SHOULD PROCEED IN TANDEM WITH THE HLG EFFORTS TO DEFINE THE FUTURE THEATER NUCLEAR POSTURE.

6. US NOTED CONCEPTUAL PROBLEMS IN ADDRESSING THEATER ASYMMETRIES SINCE ALL OF OUR DOCTRINE, PLANNING, AND POSTURE HAS BEEN FOCUSED ON AN INTEGRATED DETERRENT CONTINUUM. IT WAS, MOREOVER, DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW CLASSIC ARMS CONTROL CONCEPTS LIKE CRISIS STABILITY COULD BE APPLIED IN THE THEATER AREA. HILL AGREED STRONGLY, NOTING THAT WE WERE IN A POSITION WHERE GEOGRAPHY AND SYSTEMS IMPOSED ASYMMETRY. THE NOTION OF BALANCE GETS THROWN OUT WHEN GEOGRAPHY COMES IN, HE SAID. WILBERFORCE, HOWEVER, UNDERLINED THE POLITICAL QUESTION OF HOW LONG ONE COULD AVOID NEGOTIATIONS AFFECTING THEATER SYSTEMS IN VIEW OF FRG CONCERNS -- WHICH HE BELIEVED WERE LIKELY TO BE RECURRENT AND GROWING -- AND THE GENERAL SENSITIVITY OF
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EUROPEANS TO NUCLEAR ISSUES. MOBERLY NOTED THAT IN BILATERALS WITH FRG FOREIGN OFFICE REPRESENTATIVES IN LONDON JUNE 19, THEY HAD BEEN MORE RESTRAINED THAN SCHMIDT ON THE THEATER QUESTION, WHILE EXPRESSING THE GENERAL FRG CONCERN. MOBERLY SUGGESTED SCHMIDT IS REFLECTING PUBLIC OPINION, AND IS DEALING WITH AN ISSUE WHICH IS NOT JUST ONE OF MILITARY CAPABILITY, BUT THE PROSPECT OF SOVIET POLITICAL LEVERAGE. APART FROM THE CRUISE MISSILE ISSUE, GERMANS ARE CONCERNED THAT SALT PROCESS SEEMS TO BE FORCING FOCUS ON EUROPE, AS IN CASE OF SS-20 AND BACKFIRE. MOBERLY AND HILL, HOWEVER, NOTED THAT GERMANS WERE AMBIVALENT, AND WHILE PURSUING THE EUROSTRATEGIC BALANCE ARGUMENT, WOULD SUDDENLY REVERT TO AFFIRMATION OF THE NEED FOR INTEGRATED DETERRENCE.

7. DISCUSSING UK STRATEGIC FORCE OPTIONS, HILL SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY WOULD BE MORE LIKELY TO CHOOSE ALCM RATHER THAN GLCM, ARGUING THAT ALCM WOULD USE EXISTING AIRFIELDS,

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AIRCRAFT, AND COMMAND AND CONTROL FACILITIES, AND WOULD NOT ENCOUNTER THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS WHICH MOBILE "BARN BASED" GLCMS WOULD IN DENSELY-POPULATED UK. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT IN ANY CASE, HE DID NOT FEEL UK AS A MEDIUM POWER COULD RELY ON CRUISE MISSILES EXCLUSIVELY FOR ITS STRATEGIC FORCE, GIVEN UNCERTAINTY OF LONG TERM VULNERABILITY TO IMPROVEMENTS IN AIR DEFENSE. IN THIS REGARD, HE WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN POSSIBILITY THAT US WOULD SEEK LIMITS ON STRATEGIC AIR DEFENSE IN SALT III, ASKING SPECIFICALLY WHETHER THIS MIGHT INCLUDE SOME FORM OF LIMITS ON "LOOK DOWN -- SHOOT DOWN" CAPABILITIES WHICH MIGHT BE EFFECTIVE AGAINST CRUISE MISSILES. SIMILARLY,

MOBERLY WAS CONCERNED ABOUT IMPORTANCE OF NUMBERS AND SATURATION FOR CRUISE MISSILE PENETRATION; US EXPLAINED

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THAT SATURATION NOT ESSENTIAL.

8. WILBERFORCE ASKED WHAT FORM OF LIMITATIONS ON CRUISE MISSILES MIGHT BE POSSIBLE IN SALT III. US INDICATED IT WAS VERY HARD TO ENVISAGE POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS. PARTICULARLY SINCE SOVIETS HAD AGREED TO OUR TESTING TO 2500 KMS., AND WOULD IN ALL LIKELIHOOD DEVELOP THEIR OWN PROGRAMS TO THAT RANGE, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO VERIFY SHORTER LIMITATIONS. IT WOULD BE MORE FEASIBLE, PERHAPS, TO CONSIDER LIMITATIONS ON PLATFORMS. UK NOTED THAT QUESTION AROSE WHETHER WE COULD NEGOTIATE WITH ONLY THE PROSPECT OF DEPLOYMENTS, OR WHETHER WE HAD TO HAVE ACTUAL SYSTEMS IN HAND BEFORE SOVIETS WOULD NEGOTIATE, ESPECIALLY IF THERE WERE ANY REASON FOR THE SOVIETS TO DOUBT WE WANTED TO PROCEED OURSELVES. MOBERLY SAID THAT WE CLEARLY WANTED TO AVOID A SITUATION FOR GLCM SUCH AS AFFECTED ERW, WHERE WE WERE VULNERABLE TO A SOVIET PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN. HILL NOTED THAT GLCM WAS A FAR BETTER ANALOGUE FOR THE SS-20 THAN ERW. WILBERFORCE SUGGESTED THAT ONE OPTION FOR HANDLING THEATER SYSTEMS WOULD BE NOT TO LOOK FOR SPECIFIC TRADEOFFS, BUT RATHER FOR THE US TO DECLARE THAT IT WOULD DEPLOY GLCMS SUFFICIENT TO MATCH THE NUMBER OF DELIVERABLE RVS FROM THE SS-20 AND TO PROCEED WITH DEPLOYMENTS BEFORE ENGAGING IN ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS. WHILE NOT NECESSARILY AN ARMS CONTROL APPROACH, IT MIGHT INDUCE SOVIET RESTRAINT. US NOTED THAT THIS WAS AN INTERESTING IDEA, BUT THAT GLCM WAS NOT NECESSARILY THE ANSWER TO THE SS-20, THAT THERE WOULD BE OTHER ASPECTS TO THE SOVIET THREAT AS WELL, AND THAT CONCERN WITH THE SOVIET BUILDUP FOCUSED AS MUCH ON ITS DYNAMICS AS ON ABSOLUTE NUMBERS AND THAT PRECISE SYSTEM-FOR-SYSTEM LINKAGE COULD BE PROBLEMATIC IF EXTENDED TO OTHER AREAS. WILBERFORCE AGREED THAT THE POLITICAL PROBLEM DERIVED FROM THE CHANGES IN THE SOVIET POSTURE, RATHER THAN NUMBERS, BUT SAID HE FELT, NEVERTHELESS, THAT SOME SIMPLE LINKAGE OF GLCMS ABLE TO STRIKE

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USSR, AND SS-20 NUMBERS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE A
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CLEAR PUBLIC RATIONALE AND THUS AVOID THE KIND OF SITUATION WE ENCOUNTERED WITH ERW. HE ALSO ARGUED THAT THIS SORT OF LINK WOULD FIT GERMAN THINKING.

9. REGARDING RANGES FOR CRUISE MISSILES, HILL SAID THEY WOULD NOT SERVE AS A COUNTERWEIGHT TO THE SS-20 UNLESS THEY COULD HIT THE WESTERN MILITARY DISTRICTS OF THE USSR, WHICH IMPLIED 1500 KMS. WILBERFORCE NOTED THAT PRESENCE OF SUCH LONG RANGE GLCMS IN FRG WOULD RAISE PARTICULAR POLITICAL PROBLEMS VIS-A-VIS MOSCOW. HILL SAID THAT FRG APPEARED TO BE ONLY AT VERY EARLY STAGES OF ITS CONSIDERATION OF CRUISE MISSILE OPTIONS, WITH MOD APPARENTLY FAVORING DUAL KEY STATIONING IN FRG, BUT THERE WAS NO HARD EVIDENCE.

10. MOBERLY SAID THAT, ALONG WITH THE WORK THE HLG WAS DOING ON THE THEATER NUCLEAR POSTURE, THERE WAS A NEED FOR THE NAC TO GET INVOLVED IN THE THEATER QUESTION. WILBERFORCE SAID THAT UK THOUGHT IT DESIRABLE TO BROADEN THE EXPERTISE IN BRUSSELS ON ARMS CONTROL ISSUES GENERALLY IN LINE WITH OWEN'S PROPOSAL THAT THE ALLIANCE BE MORE ACTIVE IN THE AREA. UK WAS NOT INTERESTED IN SETTING UP NEW MACHINERY OR IN BUILDING UP INTERNATIONAL STAFF ROLE, BUT IN WORKING THROUGH NATIONAL DELEGATIONS, AS HAD BEEN DONE ON MBFR. UK WANTED TO HAVE MORE SYSTEMATIC DISCUSSIONS OF ARMS CONTROL ISSUES, MORE THAN THE SEMI-ANNUAL DISARMAMENT EXPERTS MEETINGS. MOBERLY SAID UK WOULD BE FLOATING SOME SUGGESTIONS IN BRUSSELS IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. US AGREED IT WAS IMPORTANT TO BEGIN THINKING OF CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS. WE HAD, HOWEVER, BEEN LOOKING AT A LONGER TERM SCHEDULE, WHICH WOULD HAVE BEGUN WITH SUBSTANTIVE BILATERALS IN THE FALL, AND ONLY COME MORE GRADUALLY TO THE ALLIANCE. WE FELT, IN ANY CASE, THAT DISCUSSIONS IN THE
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NAC, OR ANY SPECIAL COMMITTEE UNDER NAC AUSPICES, WOULD REQUIRE OCCASIONAL PARTICIPATION FROM CAPITALS AND SEPARATE MEETINGS OF POLICY LEVEL OFFICIALS. US PROMISED TO GET BACK TO THE UK ON THE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS BEFORE THE UK RAISED THE ISSUE IN BRUSSELS. THERE WAS AN INCONCLUSIVE DISCUSSION OF WHAT TYPE OF DISCUSSION FORUM WOULD BE MOST LIKELY TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE FRENCH, AND WHETHER A COMMITTEE WHICH WOULD DEAL WITH THEATER ARMS QUESTIONS COULD ALSO BE A PLACE TO LOOK AT THE FRENCH ARMS CONTROL INITIATIVE.

11. MEETINGS CONCLUDED WITH DISCUSSION OF FRENCH PROPOSALS

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AND NEW SOVIET INITIATIVE IN MBFR, REPORTED SEPTEL. VANCE

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